

Message Text

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ORIGIN L-03

INFO OCT-01 EUR-25 IO-13 ADP-00 M-03 SY-10 A-01 EB-11

SCA-01 AID-20 OMB-01 DOTE-00 FAA-00 CAB-09 JUSE-00

COME-00 TRSE-00 SSO-00 NSCE-00 USIE-00 INRE-00 CIAE-00

DODE-00 PM-07 H-03 INR-10 NSAE-00 NSC-10 PA-03 RSC-01

PRS-01 SS-15 /148 R

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EUR/WE - MR. SHEINBAUM

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FM SECSTATE WASHDC

TO AMEMBASSY BRUSSELS IMMEDIATE

INFO USMISSION USUN NEW YORK

C O N F I D E N T I A L STATE 140912

DELIVER OPENING OF BUSINESS

E.O. 11652: GDS

TAGS: PFOR, PINS, UN

SUBJECT: TERRORISM: POSSIBLE CONVENTION ON TAKING OF
HOSTAGES

REF: (A) USUN 2577; (B) BRUSSELS 3916; (C) STATE 135512;
(D) BRUSSELS 3860

1. IN LIGHT OF APPARENT IMMINENCE OF BELGIAN DECISION ON
POSSIBLE DRAFT CONVENTION ON TAKING OF HOSTAGES (REF A),
DEPARTMENT BELIEVES THERE IS NEED FOR FURTHER APPROACH TO
GOB TO RE-EMPHASIZE OUR CONCERN ABOUT POSSIBLE ADVERSE
EFFECTS OF SUCH AN INITIATIVE AT THIS TIME. WHILE WE WOULD
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CERTAINLY HOPE FOR OPPORTUNITY FOR ADEQUATE CONSULTATION

PRIOR TO FINAL GOB DECISION (PARA 2, REF B), RAPIDITY WITH WHICH BELGIANS APPEAR TO BE MOVING LEADS US TO CONCLUSION THAT FURTHER URGENT DISCUSSION WITH GOB IS WARRANTED AT THIS TIME.

2. FYI. IN ADDITION, A REVIEW OF REFTELS SUGGESTS THAT WE MAY HAVE INADVERTENTLY GIVEN THE BELGIANS UNDUE ENCOURAGEMENT RE SUBSTANCE OF THEIR INITIATIVE. SINCE WE WISH TO PRESERVE SPIRIT OF CLOSE COOPERATION WHICH HAS HERETOFORE PREVAILED WITH RESPECT TO THIS ISSUE, WE DO NOT, OF COURSE, WISH TO TAKE UNDULY NEGATIVE ATTITUDE TOWARD BELGIAN INITIATIVE. ON THE OTHER HAND, PARTICULARLY IN LIGHT OF UNAVAILABILITY OF SPECIFICS OF BELGIAN PROPOSAL, WE HAVE

SOME CONCERN AS TO WHETHER WE WOULD OURSELVES BE IN A POSITION TO ACCEPT OR SUPPORT CONVENTION OF SORT APPARENTLY BEING CONSIDERED BY GOB. END FYI.

3. ACCORDINGLY, EMBASSY IS REQUESTED TO APPROACH FONOFF (VIA CHARGE/DAVIGNON CHANNEL IF AT ALL POSSIBLE) MAKING FOLLOWING POINTS:

(A) WE UNDERSTAND CONSIDERATION OF POSSIBLE GOB INITIATIVE REGARDING CONVENTION ON TAKING OF HOSTAGES IS PROCEEDING RELATIVELY RAPIDLY AND THEREFORE WISH TO RE-EMPHASIZE OUR CONCERN ABOUT SUCH AN INITIATIVE AT THIS TIME.

(B) IT IS DIFFICULT TO ESTIMATE IN ADVANCE WHAT ACTION MAY PROVE TO BE POSSIBLE WITHIN CONTEXT OF UN SPECIAL COMMITTEE ON TERRORISM. WE BELIEVE THAT ANY DECISION ON AN INITIATIVE IN THIS FIELD WOULD BE PREMATURE UNTIL AFTER GOB AND USG HAVE HAD OPPORTUNITY TO ASSESS RESULTS OF WORK OF SPECIAL COMMITTEE. THIS IS NOT ONLY A QUESTION OF DETERMINING WHAT LEGAL APPROACHES MAY BE MOST PROFITABLE BUT ALSO OF GAUGING POLITICAL MOOD WHICH EMERGES FROM THIS SESSION OF SPECIAL COMMITTEE.

(C) IN PARTICULAR, WE ARE VERY SERIOUSLY CONCERNED AS TO WHAT THE TRAFFIC WILL BEAR IN TERMS OF ACTION IN THIS FIELD
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AT UNGA. WE BELIEVE PROSPECTS FOR FAVORABLE ACTION ON CONVENTION ON PROTECTION OF DIPLOMATS ARE PRESENTLY VERY GOOD. ONE OF OUR PRIMARY CONCERNS, THEREFORE, IS TO AVOID SO OVERLOADING THIS GENERAL SUBJECT AS TO CREATE POLITICAL BACKLASH WHICH MIGHT PREVENT ATTAINMENT OF THIS MINIMAL OBJECTIVE. WE BELIEVE SEVERAL IMPORTANT GOVERNMENTS AMONG NON-ALIGNED ARE LIKELY TO TAKE POSITION THAT PRICE OF FAVORABLE ACTION ON PROTECTION OF DIPLOMATS CONVENTION AT 28TH

UNGA WILL BE LOW KEY TREATMENT OF BROADER TERRORISM QUESTION. THIS WOULD NOT, OF COURSE, PRECLUDE CONTINUING EFFORTS AFTER GA ON BROADER FRONT, AND SUCH A COMPROMISE MIGHT THEREFORE BE ACCEPTABLE IF REQUIRED IN LIGHT OF POLITICAL REALITIES.

(D) IN ADDITION, ON BASIS OF WHAT WE KNOW OF GOB THINKING, WE BELIEVE NEW PROPOSAL ALONG LINES GOB APPARENTLY CONSIDERING MIGHT CREATE SOME SIGNIFICANT LEGAL AND/OR POLITICAL PROBLEMS EVEN AMONG THOSE GOVERNMENTS WHICH ARE STRONG SUPPORTERS OF SOME ACTION ON THE GENERAL PROBLEM OF INTERNATIONAL TERRORISM BECAUSE OF POSSIBLE COVERAGE OF MANY SITUATIONS HAVING ALMOST EXCLUSIVELY DOMESTIC IMPLICATIONS. WE THEREFORE BELIEVE IT EXTREMELY IMPORTANT THAT

ANY INITIATIVE IN GENERAL UN FORUM BE MADE ONLY AFTER CAREFUL CONSULTATION ON SPECIFIC DRAFT TEXT AMONG U.S./CANADA, WESTERN EUROPEAN, AND OTHER LIKE MINDED STATES. RUSH

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